

National Walleye Tour (NWT) expects strict adherence to the following rules by all contestants. Additionally, NWT suggests that co-anglers share fuel expenses with their pro partner each day of competition to help offset the high cost of boat operation. NWT also recommends the use of livewell additives to help promote the healthy release of walleye. In the event of an emergency, please call 911 first and then notify the tournament director. Below are the tournament rules for the 2019 season. (Modified 12/27/18)

## **1. Interpretation and enforcement**

Interpretation and enforcement of these rules will be left exclusively to the tournament director. Decisions of the tournament director are final in all matters and are not subject to appeal. Each contestant agrees to report any rule violation to the tournament director immediately upon discovery of the violation. Failure to report violations may be cause for disqualification. The violation of a tournament rule may result in weight loss (late penalty, dead-fish penalty and short-fish penalty), the loss of weight up to a particular time in the tournament day, the loss of weight for the entire day, the loss of the largest one-day catch, disqualification from the entire tournament or ineligibility to participate in future NWT tournaments. Protests must be made in writing on official protest sheet (provided by NWT) within 30 minutes of the check-in time of the final flight of each tournament day.

## **2. Payback and participation**

Payback is based on the number of paid entries for each tournament.

Participation is open only to members of NWT who are 16 years of age or older. Any person under the age of 18 (19 in Alabama and Nebraska) entering a tournament must also have the signature of a parent or legal guardian in the provided space on the entry form.

All contestants must have a valid fishing license (have it available upon request) and follow all state and federal regulations for the waters they fish.

### **Pro and co-angler entry:**

Pros entering the three regular season events that provide a co-angler will be guaranteed to fish. Co-anglers entering the three regular season events that provide a pro will be guaranteed to fish. Pro and co-angler priority is granted when matching pro and co angler entries (listing each other's name) are received the Monday, two weeks prior to the event and are contingent on both anglers competing in the tournament entered. Pros entering on a per tournament basis can gain priority entry to that event by providing a co-angler that fishes the event as long as entries are received two weeks prior to each event. The Co-anglers entering on a per tournament basis gain priority entry to that event by providing a pro that fishes the event as long as entries are received two weeks prior to each events deadline (Mondays). All Guaranteed Entries will end two weeks prior to each events deadline date (Mondays). Anglers that do not sign up with a pro or co will gain entry based on signing up and paying for all 3 events at the same time. If anglers sign up for only 1 event at a time, they will gain entry based on the date/time they paid for each event.

**Entry fees are non-refundable for co-anglers that pay for all 3 events to gain entry in to events.**

Entries may be made either by mail, phone, or online at [Nationalwalleyetour.com](http://Nationalwalleyetour.com). Please do not make entry by more than one method.

Entry fees will not be refunded after official practice has started at each event.

Entry fee is \$1,500 for Pro's/\$350 for Co's. Payout at each event is paid out at over 100% and paid 1in4 (please see the advertised sample payout based on 125 boats). Angler Advantage is an additional \$250 (pro) or additional \$100 (co-angler) to compete in a higher payout bracket. The OPTIONAL angler's advantage fee will be in addition to the standard tournament entry and may be paid when an angler registers for an event, or is otherwise due by the close of on-site registration prior to the tournament. The Anglers Advantage entry fee will be paid out at 100% to those participating in the program with a 1 in 4 payout based on the number of entries into the Program. If you do not understand this program please ask questions. Please do not sign up or enter the Angler Advantage program unless you feel that you completely understand the Program and Payout. The Payout for AA on the flyer is based on all 125 anglers taking part in the Program.

### **3. Point standings**

200 points are awarded to the winner of each qualifying tournament, 199 to 2nd, 198 to 3rd, etc. All anglers who receive weight credit receive points.

The top 40 pros and top 40 co-anglers from the final point standings qualify for the Championship. Pros who pay for all three regular season pro division events and fish at least two will be eligible to fish the championship. Co-anglers who pay for all three regular season co-angler division events and fish at least two will be eligible to fish the championship. NWT will match as many paid entries as possible for the Championship, but if the pro-angler and co-angler field is not even, then the regular season points will determine priority entry.

### **4. Purchasing of information**

The purchasing of, or bartering for, information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters, including but not limited to GPS waypoints (other than through commercially available sources) and the hiring of fishing guide services is not permitted 30 days prior to first tournament day of the event.

### **5. Off-limits, practice and competition**

Competitors must be paid in full the **Monday (5pm)** before each event to participate. Competitors must be off the water by end of registration (4pm).

Qualifying events competition days are Thursday and Friday with full field fishing both days. Pros and co-anglers fish together for a combined daily boat weight. Winners determined by heaviest cumulative weight for two days.

In the event of severe weather and a day of competition is canceled by the tournament director every effort will be made to fish on Saturday. If conditions are still unsafe and unable to compete then the winners will consist of the one day heaviest weight.

The championship event will be a three day event (Wed-Fri) with the full field of pros and co-anglers fishing the first two days and the final 10 pros and co-anglers fishing the third day. Winners determined by heaviest cumulative weight for three days.

During competition days, pros may not follow a non-contestant's boat or participate in the placing of markers by non-contestant's or the practice of "hole sitting" by anyone. Co-angler contestants who share a pro partner's fishing locations with another contestant will be

disqualified along with the contestant requesting and/or using the information. At the Championship after the day 2 cut has been announced anglers still fishing cannot get information from any angler who is not fishing the last day of competition.

During competition hours from takeoff until check-in, all on-water communication by contestants (excluding partners) pertaining to method or type of presentations being used, lure selection or color and location of fish or type of water being fished is strictly prohibited.

Flights over tournament waters are not permitted 30 days prior to first tournament day of the event.

## **6. Registration and pretournament meeting**

Each contestant must come to registration in person at the designated site. In an emergency contestants may request permission from the tournament director to send a person who is 16 years of age or older to represent them. If permission is granted, non-contestants can represent one person; contestants can represent themselves and one other person. This representative must attend the pretournament meeting to record flights, takeoff time, check-in time, off-limits areas, size and creel limits, and any other relevant tournament rule information. This representative must also attend the pro/co-angler draw immediately following the pretournament meeting to receive the contestant's boat number, meet the contestant's pro or co-angler, and record the pro or co-angler's lodging information, phone number and exact location for the contestant and pro or co-angler to meet prior to takeoff.

Registration hours are 2-4 p.m. local time the day before each tournament.

It is mandatory that all contestants or their representatives attend the pretournament meeting that will be held at 5 p.m. local time the day before each tournament. Contestants not present or represented for pairings may forfeit their entry fee and not be entered in the tournament.

## **7. Pairings**

Pros and co-anglers will be paired by random draw. All contestants or their representatives must contact their assigned partners following the pretournament meeting. Partners should advise each other of their respective lodging and phone numbers and establish a meeting time and place for the following morning's takeoff. The tournament director, at his sole discretion, may reassign partners prior to takeoff.

## **8. Safety**

Safe boating must be observed at all times.

Each contestant is required to wear a fastened U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device anytime the primary combustion engine is in operation from boat check until weigh-in each day of the tournament.

All boats must be equipped with an emergency ignition-shutoff device that must be securely attached to the driver's body whenever the primary combustion engine is in operation. A driver must be seated behind the steering wheel or at the tiller and in full control of the boat whenever the primary combustion engine is in operation and in gear. Each boat is required to have a fully functional marine band radio.

At the discretion of the tournament director, tournament days may be shortened, postponed or

canceled due to unsafe weather or water conditions.

## **9. Sportsmanship**

All contestants are required to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy and conservation and to conduct themselves in a manner that will be a credit to themselves, to NWT, NWTs' sponsors, the sport of fishing and NWTs' efforts to promote the sport. Conduct not complying with these standards includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Violation of, or failure to comply with, any of the rules for the NWT.
- Consumption and/or possession of alcoholic beverages or any kind of mind-altering substance during tournament hours extending through the weigh-in procedure.
- Abuse of, or addiction to, mind-altering substances.
- Conviction of a felony within the past 36 months.
- Suspension/disqualification, probation or ban from any tournament or fishing organization.
- Any other words, conduct or actions reflecting unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair competition and compliance with tournament rules, or which fail to comply with the standards set forth in the first sentence of paragraph.

In case of any conduct not complying with the standards outlined above, NWT shall have the right to refuse an application to compete, to deny a confirmed application to compete by returning the entry fee or to disqualify a contestant.

## **10. Boat operation**

Pros will have control of boat operation and waters to be fished. Pros must provide all presentation equipment such as downriggers, planer boards, side planers, rods, reels, bait, line and terminal tackle for their own use and the use of their co-angler partners. With the exception of two rods and reels, co-anglers are not permitted to bring tackle into their pro's boat without permission from the pro.

The use of mobile communication devices, including but not limited to, cell phones, marine radios, walkie-talkies, CBs, etc., during tournament hours is strictly prohibited except in an emergency (severe weather, breakdowns, etc.) or to communicate with lockmasters about locking or with the tournament director.

Co-anglers are not allowed to record GPS waypoints or use any type of handheld GPS during any competition day.

Contestants are expected to compete every day for which they are qualified; failure to do so may result in ineligibility to compete in future NWT tournaments.

## **11. Boat and horsepower regulation**

All boats must be propeller-driven and a minimum of 16 feet in length.

All boats must be equipped with wheel or tiller steering; no other steering device will be permitted.

No barges or similarly cumbersome craft will be permitted.

Each boat must have all required U.S. Coast Guard safety equipment.

Boats must contain a properly aerated livewell space to maintain alive a limit catch of fish.

Maximum horsepower for outboards used in tournament competition cannot exceed the horsepower capacity set forth on the “Maximum Capacities” placard.

- Each boat must have a clearly legible “Maximum Capacities” (or comparably titled) placard that includes a maximum horsepower rating affixed to the boat by the manufacturer.
- The horsepower of the primary outboard engine must not exceed the maximum horsepower capacity specified on the placard.
- Each contestant agrees to submit their boat and/or motor to an inspection by NWT personnel.
- Falsifying information on entry forms or altering the horsepower numbers on the motor or rating placard will be cause for disqualification from the tournament and may result in ineligibility to compete in future NWT events.

Fishing platforms must be factory-installed equipment. No portable platforms may be used in tournament competition.

Fuel may be carried only in factory-installed (built-in) fuel tanks. Optional remote engine fuel tanks must be factory- or factory-authorized-dealer installed and be strapped or otherwise secured. Any additional fuel used during the tournament day must be purchased from a retail facility open to the public and pumped through a hose with a nozzle.

## **12. Permitted fishing methods**

Fishing is defined as having a lure attached to a line with the lure in the water.

All fish must be caught alive in a conventional sporting manner.

Live bait may be used.

No more than two fishing rods with one lure each, or one fishing rod with two lures per angler may be used at a time unless the state or lake limit is more restrictive, in which case the state or lake limit will prevail.

Trolling as a method of fishing is permitted.

## **13. Permitted fishing locations**

Contestants may fish anywhere on tournament waters available to the public and accessible by boat, except areas posted or otherwise designated as “off-limits,” “no boats,” “keep out,” “restricted,” “no trespassing” or “no fishing” (or similar language or markings intended to restrict public access) by NWT, local, state or federal officials, or within a contestant’s first-marked fishing area. A “marked fishing area” is defined as a 50-foot diameter area around a marker buoy placed by a contestant on the same day of competition. The contestant placing the buoy must remain within the marked area and may leave only to play and land a fish. When limited out or not fishing, the buoy must be picked up. A “marked fishing area” may be navigated through if it restricts access to other fishable waters.

All fishing must be conducted from the boat. At no time may a contestant leave the boat to land a fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters.

The cutting of trees, bushes and/or logs after the start of the pretournament meeting and/or the removal of official local, state or federal barricades at any time to make an area more accessible

by boat is strictly prohibited and may result in disqualification from the tournament. The use of cables, ropes, chains or any type of block and tackle system to maneuver a boat into fishing waters is strictly prohibited and will result in disqualification from the tournament.

Contestants must leave and return to the check-in by boat. The boat must remain in the tournament waters during the tournament day. No tournament boat may be loaded on a trailer before the weigh-in except with the permission of the tournament director.

In the event of equipment failure or emergency, there are two permitted methods of returning to the check-in: (1) by both partners remaining in their boat and being towed by water by another contestant or non-contestant, or (2) one angler can stay with the boat and the other can get a ride with another competitor. Under these two conditions the contestants' catch may be counted without a penalty (except for late penalties, dead-fish penalties or other penalties pertaining to other tournament rules). Contestants who elect to return to the check-in by any other means than cited above will forfeit their day's catch to that point in time of the tournament day.

Any contestant returning to the check-in point will be eligible to restart and resume competition under the supervision of the tournament director or his designated tournament official. It is the sole responsibility of contestants to locate the tournament director to request a restart.

#### **14. Checkpoints**

There will be only one checkpoint for boat check in the morning and one check-in point in the afternoon. Failure to go through boat check and checkout in the morning or failure to check in at the check-in point will result in disqualification. All fishing must cease upon check-in.

#### **15. Late penalty**

Contestants who are not at the check-in area at the appointed time will be penalized 1 pound per minute, deducted from the total weight. Any contestant more than 15 minutes late will lose credit for that day's weight.

#### **16. Live fish**

Every effort must be made to keep fish alive through the use of a properly aerated livewell. Eight ounces will be deducted from the total weight for each dead fish brought to the scales. All balancing weights must be removed before fish are presented at the bump tank. Balancing weights in the bump tank will result in a 1 pound penalty.

#### **17. Scoring**

Scoring is determined by the combined pounds and ounces of both contestants' catch during each tournament. Pros and co-anglers fish together for a combined daily boat weight.

Only walleye, sauger or saugeye are accepted species.

The weigh-in limit will be five fish per boat unless the state or lake limit is less than five, in which case the state or lake limit prevails. In some cases the possession limit may exceed five fish per boat (see schedule details for possession and tournament limits for each tournament). Contestants possessing more than the authorized limit will have their catch to that point disqualified.

The minimum length limit will be 14 inches unless the state or lake limit is more than 14 inches, in which case the state or lake limit prevails. Fish presented for weigh-in that fail to measure the prescribed length (short or long in the case of slot limits) will be disqualified and penalized at the rate of 1 pound for each short or long fish presented.

Each contestant's catch must be presented in an official weigh-in bag.

### **18. Ties**

The heaviest one-day catch for the tournament will break ties on day 2 of qualifying tournaments and the NWT Championship. If a tie remains, it will be broken first by point standings, then by total number of fish for the tournament, then by total number of live fish for the tournament and then by lottery. Ties on day 3 of NWT Championship will be resolved by day-2 standings.

Ties will be broken for Angler of the Year races by total accumulative weight for all 3 regular season tournaments combined. If a tie remains, it will be broken by total number of fish for the year, then by total number of live fish for the year, then by lottery.

### **19. Truth verification test**

Each contestant agrees to submit, by signature on the tournament entry form, to a polygraph or voice stress analysis examination and to abide by its conclusion. Failure to pass an examination will result in disqualification from the tournament. Truth verification tests will be used at NWTs' sole discretion, and the determination of the meaning of the results will be made solely by NWT.

### **20. Insurance**

Liability insurance with coverage of not less than \$300,000 per occurrence is required of all pro contestants in NWT tournaments. Proof of insurance must be with the boat being used and must cover all passengers in the boat. Random checks will be conducted. Failure to provide proof of insurance when requested by the tournament director may result in disqualification.

### **21. Media Coverage**

Contestants are required to comply with all requests (included but not limited to: video, still camera, access to boat and access to fishing area) made by NWT film crew for the purpose of gathering media coverage throughout events. Failure to coordinate with and accommodate the NWT film crew needs will result in disqualification of that event.

### **22. Captions**

The captions at the beginning of each paragraph are intended to facilitate convenience in referring to the various rules. The captions are not part of the substance of the paragraph and should not be used in construction of any paragraph or of this overall set of rules.